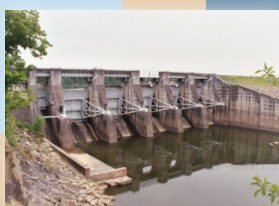




Alabama Rivers Alliance

Water Is Life



2013 ANNUAL REPORT

ALABAMA RIVERS ALLIANCE 2013 ANNUAL REPORT

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Communications Coordinator*

FROM THE DIRECTOR

Dear friends,

As I reflect on this year's accomplishments, I am bursting with gratitude for all of our partners that helped make 2013 a banner year for the Alabama Rivers Alliance. Our efforts have touched every corner of the state and our work to protect Alabama's water resources is gaining unprecedented momentum.

This year we organized a series of symposia informing the discussion about Alabama's water management planning with meetings in Mobile, Auburn, Huntsville, Dothan, and Gadsden. These meetings were attended by over 400 citizens ranging from farmers to water suppliers to academicians to environmentalists. The partners who helped host these meetings were equally as diverse – Alabama Chapter of the Sierra Club, Mobile Bay Group of the Alabama Sierra Club, Auburn University Water Resources Center, Alabama Water Watch, Alabama Cooperative Extension, University of Alabama at Huntsville, Alabama Farmer's Federation, Flint River Conservation Association, Coalition for a Green Huntsville, Troy University, Coosa Valley Group of the Alabama Sierra Club, and Huntsville Canoe Club. These meetings helped raise the level of conversation across the state about how Alabama will sustain and protect water for present and future generations in preparation for the Alabama Water Agencies Working Group report, which was delivered to Governor Bentley on December 1st, 2013. We look forward to seeing the recommendations from the AWAAG and continuing this work in 2014.



Cindy and the Alabama Rivers Alliance lead a group of paddlers up the Alabama River to the state capitol to lobby for sustainable water policy on Rivers of Alabama Day.

Along with our focus on protecting the flow in our rivers, we continued our tradition of supporting the alliance of local river watchdog groups around the state to protect water quality and quality of life in Alabama communities. The Alabama Rivers Alliance was able to leverage national grants in order to bring \$40,000 new dollars for water monitoring in watersheds impacted by coal burning power plants. Nearly 90% of those grant dollars were passed directly through to local groups for on the ground work in their watersheds. These dollars were all matched one to one resulting in a total of \$80,000 new dollars for addressing the impacts of coal on Alabama's waterways.

The Alabama Rivers Alliance staff also contributed countless hours to local community groups, helping them organize around water issues, pursue legal options for problems affecting their waterways, build their capacity, and plan for long-term sustainability.

From all of us at the Alabama Rivers Alliance, please accept this annual report as a testament of what your support and our continued partnerships can achieve.

Save Rivers,

Cindy Lowry
Executive Director

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THE ALABAMA WATER AGENDA: 2013 YEAR IN REVIEW

The *Alabama Water Agenda* is the Alabama Rivers Alliance's guide to achieving healthy waters in Alabama. It identifies four key solutions toward achieving this goal: 1) Policy, 2) Enforcement, 3) Agency Coordination, and 4) Adequate Agency Funding. Below are the ways in which we have worked toward these solutions in 2013.

1) Water Policy

The Alabama Rivers Alliance advocates the development of a comprehensive statewide water policy that will protect all water users in Alabama and ensure that the State protects our water ways from over consumption. In response to Governor Bentley's 2012 directive to the Alabama Water Agencies Working Group to provide a recommendation for such a plan, a primary goal for us this year was to spread the word about this directive and educate stakeholders on the importance of having a good water plan.

On April 9, 2013, Rivers of Alabama Day, the Alabama Rivers Alliance led river advocates from across the state on a paddle up the Alabama River to the state capitol where we lobbied legislators to work with the governor to make the state water plan a success. Outside Montgomery, we partnered with diverse stakeholders to hold five symposia across the state with the goal of increasing stakeholder involvement in developing the policy. The Water Agencies Working Group has now submitted its report to the governor and we are currently working with his office to get the report released to the stakeholders for review and comment. We are currently working on 2014's seminal water policy symposium to be held preceding Alabama Water Rally in Montgomery on March 7th 2014.

All our neighbors have a water plan.



Shouldn't we?

"The Probability of [worse case scenarios] grows with each day of inactivity with regard to planning for and managing Alabama's Water resources in a comprehensive manner"
- Alabama Water Resources Study Commission, October 19, 1990

2) Enforcement

Petition to EPA - The Alabama Rivers Alliance works with partners across the state to ensure that our officials enforce laws that protect our water ways. In 2010, we led a group of 14 petitioners asking the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to either reform Alabama's water pollution permitting program to bring it in line with the Clean Water Act or to remove permitting authority from the State. It has been almost four years and EPA has failed to respond to the petition. In February, petitioners formally put the EPA on notice that we expect timely action on our petition. If the EPA does not respond to this notice, we have notified the agency that petitioners will ask federal courts to compel it to act. In the meantime, we have participated in an ongoing series of conversations with the Alabama Department of Environmental Management to identify opportunities to improve state-level water protection.

Hydropower Dam Relicensing - The Alabama Rivers Alliance joined American Rivers and the Southern Environmental Law Center to review the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission's license to Alabama Power Company for conducting hydropower operations on the Coosa River. Listed as one of American River's Most Endangered Rivers because of hydropower operations, the Coosa is one of the most impacted rivers in Alabama, and decisions made in this relicensing will impact the entire system all the way to Mobile Bay. Due to concerns about endangered species, we formally requested reconsideration of the project's license.



The Alabama Rivers Alliance has played a key role in working to improve the operations of hydropower dams in Alabama for more than a decade.

3) Agency Coordination

State Agency Coordination - Until Alabama adopts a comprehensive water management plan, each agency will have to use its individual authority to protect drinking water sources and supplies. Unfortunately, the Alabama Surface Mining Commission and Alabama Department of Environmental Management have continued to reject the City of Birmingham's calls to protect drinking water supplies on the Black Warrior River from mining operations. The Alabama Rivers Alliance supported Black Warrior

Riverkeeper's petition to the Surface Mining Commission to declare certain lands unsuitable for mining due to clear threat to drinking water supplies. Despite the concerns expressed by the Birmingham Water Works and the Commission's clear obligations to the contrary, the Commission denied the petition.

Federal Agency Coordination - We are encouraged by the EPA's and U.S. Army Corps of Engineer's ongoing collaboration to clarify what waters should be protected under the Clean Water Act after a series of court cases muddled the regulatory waters. In 2013, agencies released a white paper detailing scientific basis for protecting tributaries and associated wetlands of navigable waters in order to protect the chemical, physical, and biological integrity of the Waters of the US. We are working with several partner groups nationally to prepare comments on the agencies' rulemaking expected in 2014.

4) Funding

While the Alabama Department of Environmental Management weathered cutbacks caused by proration over the last few years, it is still grossly underfunded. Alabama is routinely ranked 49 or 50 in funding environmental protection. As Director LeFleur has noted on several occasions, this is a clear message that environmental protection, including protecting our state's waters, is not a high priority for our elected officials. This is the key issue that the Alabama Rivers Alliance raised in the Petition to the EPA. We continue to work with our partner groups and the Alabama Department of Environmental Management to explore ways to keep our state's environmental programs working as efficiently and effectively as possible until adequate resources are provided through the state and federal budgets.

We have been encouraged by the Water Agency Working Group's model of collaboration between agencies to secure funding for water management. The Alabama Rivers Alliance supported the legislature's funding \$1 million for water assessments across Alabama which required interagency cooperation between ADEM, the Geological Survey of Alabama, and the Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources to collaborate on ecological assessments and the GSA and the Alabama Office of Water Resources to collaborate on water availability assessments. This funding is a good start, and we are working with the agencies, the governor's office, and the legislature to put in place permanent mechanisms to ensure that state water management is funded at appropriate levels into the future.

WATERSHED LEADERSHIP PROGRAM: 2013 YEAR IN REVIEW

Alabama's waterways are home to some of the largest variety of plants and animals on this planet. Unfortunately, they are also some of the most threatened. Thankfully, our rivers have a diverse network of people and organizations working to protect them that is just as diverse and special as the variety of species within our waters. The Alabama Rivers Alliance works to build, unite, and support Alabama's network of over fifty grassroots water protection organizations. This year, Alliance Coordinator Adam Johnston traveled over 11,964 miles across the state working with local groups to help protect water quality and quality of life across Alabama.

"I want to thank all of our members and groups who have welcomed me into their communities over this past year," said Alliance Coordinator Adam Johnston. "I am proud to report that our alliance is making a difference in protecting water from the headwaters to the Gulf." Below are some of the highlights of this year's activities and accomplishments.

The year began with the Alabama Rivers Alliance teaming with the Coalition of Alabama Students for the Environment to plan an event bringing together college students across state and highlighting opportunities to get involved in environmental advocacy efforts. This partnership resulted in the highest student participation in history



Proposed site of the Shepherd Bend Mine on the Black Warrior River.



This year, Alliance Coordinator Adam Johnston traveled over 11,964 miles across Alabama working with local groups to protect water quality and quality of life in our state.

at our 15th Alabama Water Rally. Nearly $\frac{1}{4}$ of all participants were students. More than 125 participants representing over 56 organizations attended, making it the most successful rally in history.

From the mountains to the coast, freshwater runs through our state providing life to all communities. In late March our attention turned to Dog River, a tributary to Mobile Bay. The Dog River Clearwater Revival group was the recipient of a grant from River Network through their IMPACT program. This program supported our efforts to lead board training for DCRC as part of a two-year capacity building program for local groups in Alabama. Through this national partnership, we also provided strategic planning for the Coosa Riverkeeper and River Network provided direct capacity building to Tennessee Riverkeeper.

We also spent time this spring in the Tennessee watershed attending Earth Day events in Huntsville with the Flint River Conservation Association and in Florence with the Shoals Environmental Alliance, continuing the great partnership we have with both of these long-standing organizations.

As the weather heated up, so did our community work. Thanks to a grant from The Southern Partners Fund, we were able to continue our work with Black Belt Citizens Fighting for Health and Justice, an all-volunteer community group located in Uniontown, Alabama. The citizens of this community are overburdened with pollution from many sources, such as wastewater and coal ash, and they are working hard to find ways to improve the air, water, and land in their area.

We were proud to facilitate visits from national organizations Green Peace and Earth Justice to Uniontown and help them explore ways to support the work of this community. We also helped connect the community with support from university professors and graduate students. UAB School of Public Health graduate students participated in a three month intern project that helped Perry County residents identify environmental factors that affect public health. Dr. Betsy Dobbins of Samford University conducted water sampling, finding arsenic and high levels of conductivity present in creeks near a local landfill.

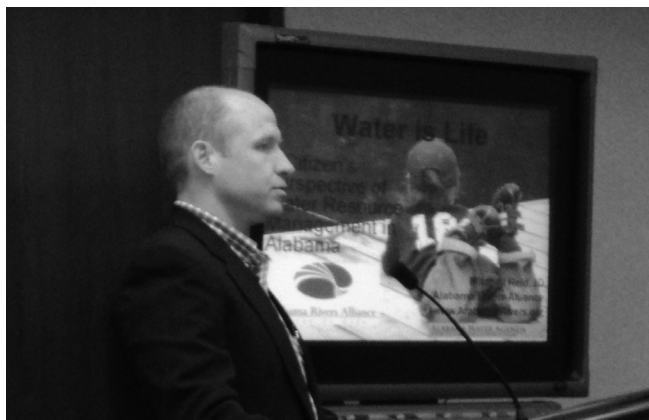
Threats to Alabama's drinking water supplies made a number of headlines in 2013. The Alabama Rivers Alliance supported efforts by our partners at Black Warrior Riverkeeper to declare lands around the intake for Birmingham's drinking water unsuitable for mining. We also followed efforts by the Mobile Bay Group of the Alabama Sierra Club and Mobile Baykeeper to stop an oil pipeline from crossing Mobile's primary drinking water supply. The lack of protection of a resource as important as drinking water highlights the extreme need for a comprehensive water management plan for Alabama. Many of our efforts across the state revolved around organizing meetings to educate and inform stakeholders about the state's water management planning process.



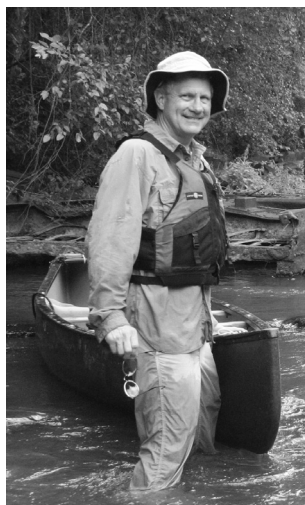
Adam helps a young scientist identify some aquatic critters found in the Cahaba River.

Need a presenter?

Do you need a presenter to come speak to your community group? The Alabama Rivers Alliance works statewide to educate Alabama citizens about issues relating to our work. We are happy to come visit classrooms, churches, civic groups, businesses, and more. We have an array of presentations suitable for all audiences. Contact us at info@alabamarivers.org or 205-322-6395 about scheduling a presentation.



A BOARD TRANSITION



Henry Hughes

Henry Hughes has served as board president for the Alabama Rivers Alliance since January of 2011. Under Henry's leadership the organization managed to thrive through a tough economy without having to cut staff. We also adopted several new organizational policies to keep up with new IRS requirements and nonprofit best practices. During Henry's tenure as president, we were able to update the Alabama Water Agenda and our three year strategic plan. The board plays a key role in helping guide the organization's direction and internal policies and Henry has given tirelessly to this work for the past three years. In addition to his day job as Director of Education at the Birmingham Botanical Gardens, Henry is a volunteer Executive Director for the Friends of Shades of Creek. Henry will continue to serve on the Alabama Rivers Alliance board, but will be passing the presidential torch to our new president, Eartha McGoldrick.



Eartha McGoldrick

We thank Henry for his years of leadership and look forward to continuing our tradition of great board leadership at the Alabama Rivers Alliance as Eartha begins her presidency.

Eartha has served on the Alabama Rivers Alliance board of directors since 2009 and has been vice president since 2012. She is also a founding and current board member of the Hulsey Little River Trust. Eartha began her career in daily newspapers, and later returned to Birmingham to become an educator. After earning her Master's in Education from the University of Alabama at Birmingham, she now teaches at Clay-Chalkville Middle School.

WILD & SCENIC FILM FESTIVAL

The Wild & Scenic Film Festival is the largest film festival of its kind in the US. With a home festival based in California and satellite festivals across the country, the Wild & Scenic films combine stellar filmmaking, beautiful cinematography and first-rate storytelling to inform, inspire and ignite solutions and possibilities to restore the earth and human communities while creating a positive future for the next generation.

This is the sixth year that the Alabama Rivers Alliance has partnered with the Alabama Environmental Council to host the Wild & Scenic Film Festival in Alabama with our sixth annual showing in Birmingham. This year was also our first-ever showing in Huntsville, produced in partnership with the Flint River Conservation Association and Green Coalition of Huntsville and Madison County.

Both of this year's showings also featured local films produced through the Southern Environmental Law Center's Southern Exposure Film Fellowship Program



Would you like to help us bring the Wild & Scenic Film Festival to your community?

Contact Katie Shaddix at info@alabamarivers.org or 205-322-6395 to learn more about bringing Wild & Scenic to your community.

IN ADDITION TO THE MANY GENEROUS INDIVIDUALS WHO MAKE OUR WORK POSSIBLE, WE WOULD LIKE TO THANK THE FOLLOWING FOUNDATIONS, PARTNERS, AND BUSINESSES FOR THEIR SUPPORT OF OUR WORK:

ABAHAC • Alabama Chapter of the Sierra Club • American Rivers
brick & tin • Charles Stewart Mott Foundation • Community Foundation of Greater Birmingham
Curtis and Edith Munson Foundation • Daniel Foundation of Alabama • EBSCO
Energy Foundation • Good People Brewing Company • Hancock Timber Resources, Inc
Hugh Kaul Foundation • JohnnyGreenSeeds Wines • New Outlook Financial • Patagonia, Inc.
Perret Financial • ROJO • Southern Alliance for Clean Energy
Southern Environmental Law Center • Southern Partners Fund • River Network
Stephens Foundation • West Wind Foundation • Wild South • World Wildlife Federation

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

The Alabama Rivers Alliance operates an annual budget on the calendar year. Therefore, we are displaying the full year end financial information from 2012 as well as the "year-to-date" in 2013.

FISCAL YEAR ENDED DEC. 31, 2012	
INCOME	
Individual contributions	\$40,029
Organizational memberships and donations	7,850
Grants (all private foundations)	162,024
Events	27,373
Other	10,833
TOTAL INCOME	\$248,112
EXPENSES	
Personnel	\$168,599
Overhead expenses	38,374
Travel and training	15,707
Professional fees (accounting, consulting, etc...)	47,163
Printing and postage	5,536
Events	14,777
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$290,156

FISCAL YEAR TO DATE JAN. 1 - DEC. 1, 2013	
INCOME	
Individual contributions	\$36,649
Organizational memberships and donations	8,975
Grants (all private foundations)	241,393
Events	29,282
Other	11,795
TOTAL INCOME	\$303,097
EXPENSES	
Personnel	\$162,072
Overhead expenses	41,890
Travel and training	16,034
Professional fees (accounting, consulting, etc...)	19,893
Printing and postage	5,457
Events	15,562
Pass-through funding to local groups	41,000
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$301,098

WHY OUR MEMBERS ARE ESSENTIAL

Individual giving is essential because it allows us to dedicate funds where they are most needed. We are entirely privately funded and support from our members is essential to achieving our mission of protecting Alabama's rivers.

Having a large membership base also helps us present a strong voice to our state decision makers when advocating for the protection of our waterways. Your membership is crucial. Please join or renew today, and tell your friends to join our alliance as well!

I WANT TO BE A MEMBER OF THE ALABAMA RIVERS ALLIANCE!

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Day Phone: _____ Evening Phone: _____

Email Address: _____

INDIVIDUAL & FAMILY PARTNERSHIPS

☐ Protector \$5,000 ☐ Sustainer \$1,000 ☐ Patron \$500 ☐ Supporter \$250
☐ Friend \$100 ☐ Family \$45 ☐ Individual \$35 ☐ Other _____

ORGANIZATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS

☐ Watershed Network Supporter \$150 ☐ Watershed Network Partner \$100 ☐ Watershed Start-up \$50

The Alabama Rivers Alliance is a nonprofit organization working to unite the citizens of Alabama to protect our right to clean, healthy water.

Mail to: 2014 6th Ave North, Suite 200 • Birmingham, AL 35203 • Phone: 205-322-6395

Join online at www.AlabamaRivers.org

SAVE THESE
DATES



Alabama Water Symposium

*Discuss the recommendations of the
Alabama Water Agencies Working Group*

March 7, 2014

Troy University, Montgomery, AL

Alabama Water Rally

Annual conference of the Alabama Rivers Alliance

March 7-9, 2014

Embassy Suites, Montgomery, AL

Rivers of Alabama Day

*Paddle up the Alabama River and
march to the Capitol*

April 8, 2014

Montgomery, AL

WWW.ALABAMARIVERS.ORG



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